



# *Transportation Commission*

February 19, 2020

7:00 PM

City Council Workroom (City Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)

## **AGENDA**

1. Public Comment Period (not to exceed 15 min)
2. Minutes of the January 15, 2020 Meeting
3. Commission Updates
4. **INFORMATION ITEM: High Capacity Transit Corridors Update**
5. **ACTION ITEM: Proposed Applications for Commonwealth Smart Scale Program**
6. **ACTION ITEM: Proposed Application to the Transportation-Land Use Connections Program**
7. **INFORMATIONAL ITEM: Calendar Year 2020 Work Plan**
8. Updates to Receive (Consent)
  - A. WMATA Budget
  - B. Legislative Update
9. Other business

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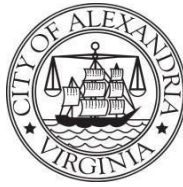
**Public hearing items are so noted on the agenda.** The Commission may receive public comments on other agenda items at its discretion. When there is no public hearing, the Commission encourages written comments on agenda items be sent to [transportationcommission@alexandriava.gov](mailto:transportationcommission@alexandriava.gov) in advance of or after the meeting.

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*Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 18, 2020 at 7:00 PM in City Council Workroom (City Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor).*

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**City of Alexandria**  
Transportation Commission

**Regular Meeting**

January 15, 2020  
7:00 p.m.  
Council Workroom

**MINUTES**

**Commissioners Present:** Vice-Chair Melissa McMahon, Commissioner Bruce Marsh, Commissioner Casey Kane, Commissioner John Goebel, Commissioner Carolyn Schroeder, Commissioner Jakubek, Commissioner Alyia Gaskins.

**Staff Present:** Yon Lambert – Director, Transportation Environmental Services, Hillary Orr – Deputy Director, Transportation, Christopher Ziemann - Transportation Planning Division Chief, Jennifer Slesinger - Transportation Planning Division, Sharese Thomas - Transportation Planning Division, Jose Ayala – Department of Planning & Zoning.

Audio/Visual<sup>1</sup> presentation is available online:

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/TransportationCommission>

Vice-Chair McMahon called the Transportation Commission meeting to order at 7:04 pm.

**1. Public Comment Period**

Phillip Matyas a property owner on North Lee Street expressed concerns about the safety of the proposed loading zones (in terms of the King Street Place concept) in Fayette Alley and Union Street in addition to the pick-up/drop-off area on Lee Street given the pedestrian fatality that occurred a few years ago on Swift Alley. Mr. Matyas is requesting the Commission to consider making the following safety schematic adjustments to the proposed King Street Place schematic:

- Have a Fairfax drop-off at the western facing lane; making traffic one-way toward the river; blocking the area on South Lee Street and have traffic turn left; and having the lane on the northside of the street become a loading zone, valet, drop-off/pick-up area so that it's a natural process when you drop off on the western part of Fairfax going to King Street.
- Mr. Matyas observed that a backup occurs because of the loading/unloading in Fayette Alley and presents tremendous safety issues. He recommended the following changes in response:
  - Prohibit buses within two blocks of King Street from Duke to Queen Street.

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<sup>1</sup> https://www.alexandriava.gov/TransportationCommission

- Have buses turn left onto North Lee Street and drop-off at South Lee Street and King Street.
- Install signage to read “no thru traffic” and “resident access only.” Enforcement would be done through ticketing and towing on the south end of South Lee Street.
- Install signage to read “no thru traffic, for residents only” on Swift Alley as two-way traffic on Lee Street is a safety concern.
- Keep the trolley running during the pilot on the 100 block of King Street to create an urban feel.

## **2. January Meeting Minutes**

Commissioner Kane made a motion and Commissioner Goebel seconded the motion to accept the minutes as presented. Motion carries with Vice-Chair McMahon and Commissioner Gaskins abstaining due to their excused absence.

## **3. Commissioner Updates**

**Commissioner Kane:** The Traffic and Parking Board (T&PB) did not meet in December; the next meeting is January 27.

**Commissioner Marsh:** The Potomac Yard Metrorail Implementation Work Group (PYMIG) did not meet in December. The groundbreaking ceremony was attended by the Mayor, various City Elected Officials, and Commissioner Kane.

**Commissioner Gaskins:** The next Alexandria Mobility Plan meeting is on January 22.

**Commissioner Jakubek:** The Landmark/Van Dorn Planning Committee has not confirmed a meeting date yet.

**Vice-Chair McMahon:** The Planning Commission meeting was canceled on January 7, due to inclement weather. On behalf of the Transportation and Planning Commission, Vice-Chair McMahon attended the Alexandria City Boards and Commissions training session on January 15. A handout was distributed on retaining records for FOIA purposes pertaining to the work of the Transportation Commission that City staff would not have, for example if someone from the community emails a Commissioner directly. Vice-Chair McMahon recommended that Commissioners keep a copy of the email for record keeping purposes. It was also mentioned in the training session that if three or more Commissioners are discussing any work regarding the Transportation Commission, it is considered a meeting. This includes discussions on email, Skype, or conference calls. Also, there was discussion on options that Boards and Commissions have for establishing an electronic participation policy. While it is not a substitute for in-person meetings, it is a way for a Commissioner who may be temporarily disabled or who had an unforeseen circumstance to participate in no more than two meetings a year electronically. Quorum is still required in the room, only one Commissioner per meeting can participate electrically. Staff confirmed that the Commission currently does not have an electronic participation policy in place. Director Lambert suggested that if the Commission is interested in implementing an electronic participation policy to make it an information agenda item for further discussion at a future Transportation Commission meeting.

## **4. Public Hearing: King Street Place Endorsement**

Staff is proposing a pilot program to convert the 100 block of King Street between Lee Street and Union Street into a temporary pedestrian-only space during the weekends from April until October 2020. The groundwork

for the pedestrian improvements started as part of the Union Street Corridor Study in 2012. The circulation for a pedestrian only space was evaluated as part of the 2015 Lower King Street Multimodal Feasibility Study which involved extensive community outreach. Around the same time, the Old Town Area Parking Study (OTAPS) working group was formed to make recommendations on parking management. Findings from the 2015 Lower King Street Multimodal Feasibility Study were put on hold until the OTAPS study was completed.

In the summer of 2019, Council requested that this project be added to the FY2020 Interdepartmental Long-Range Work Plan and that staff return with a project plan.

In October 2019, staff presented a timeline and process for implementing a pilot project lasting from April through October 2020 and received more direction from Council. This is a joint project between Planning and Zoning (P&Z), Transportation and Environmental Services, Department of Project Implementation, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities, and Visit Alexandria. Staff is seeking Transportation Commission endorsement today. Staff is updating Council in January and is seeking approval of the pilot in February. At the end of the pilot, a report will be provided to City Council with recommendations for a path forward.

Staff has developed a draft design for the block based on input from the business community, safety restrictions, past feasibility studies, and comments from Council and the Waterfront Commission. The proposed design would allow for additional outdoor dining, public space, and a larger pedestrian space. The pilot would remove parking at all times, allowing the outdoor dining furniture to remain and allow two-way vehicular traffic during the week. The recommendation to remove parking at all times is based on business feedback, as well as cost savings from avoiding modifying the street design between weekdays and weekends. Additionally, in response to requests for more public seating, staff is proposing to replace the two unrestricted parking spaces on the unit block of King Street with more options for public seating.

Staff will provide updates to the T&PB and Council in January and receive feedback on the current proposals. Council will be asked to approve the pilot in February. If approved, staff will provide updates to the Special Events Committee and T&PB in March before implementation on April 18.

**Commissioner Gaskins** asked staff to address the barrier safety concern. Staff is currently working with the Fire and Police Department to address some of the safety designs regarding barriers. The Police Department has requested that staff install solid barriers that bolt in the ground. Staff is also considering using planters and boulders for seating.

**Commissioner Kane** asked if the only loading zone on Union Street would be before the alley although trucks currently extend all the way down on Union Street. Staff confirmed trucks would pull into the loading zone based on turning analysis. Kane asked about a blanket approach for requests for loading zones and delivery spaces to the T&PB to prevent recurring requests. Staff is considering this. Kane asked if there would be an option to close vehicular traffic during the weekday. Staff's thinking is to build in some flexibility for pilots within the pilot. Staff will test different options over the next couple of months to see what works and how businesses and the community like the different changes.

**Commissioner Jakubek** asked staff to address the extra public spaces on the unit block and if vehicles will be driving through. Staff stated that few cars will be driving through, but the Trolley must be accommodated.

**Commissioner Gaskins** asked about other options in terms of flexibility so that the feedback received can be tested and implemented sooner. Staff is taking to Council a pilot with flexibility to test and implement quickly. This includes making changes to parking without requiring separate approvals from the T&PB. Additionally, permits for the restaurants will last the entire duration of the pilot. Gaskins also asked staff whether they can assess what the City is working to achieve, such as health, wellness, and diversity; and how to capture those metrics. Staff is currently considering designing intercept surveys.

**Commissioner Marsh** asked about questions from business owners about an integrated design with the park at the end of King Street. P&Z is integrating the colors from the water and park to blend in, but it will be handled by the Waterfront Commission. Staff is exploring other alternatives that would highlight the history of Alexandria, such as bringing out the elements of the tracks under the 100 block of King Street.

**Vice-Chair McMahon** asked for clarification on the pink paint representing the pedestrian zone. Is the pink intended to mean pedestrian zone for pedestrian flow, without counting or discounting the current outdoor seating. The current outdoor dining on the sidewalk will remain. The “swoosh” design addresses concerns of the restaurants at the ends of the block. It also fits nicely where the fire hydrants are located, while keeping pedestrians closer to the retail space.

**Vice-Chair McMahon** asked follow-up questions regarding Mr. Matyas’ concerns about the pilot. She asked staff to discuss what they are considering and what they might be experimenting with outside of the block. Staff is looking for consistent signage in the north alley for loading zones and reviewing what the City has in other alleys regarding “no through” signs. The benefit of the pilot is having the before data, so staff can observe and take traffic counts in the Spring, to see if there are other modifications they need to make. Also, staff will have the opportunity to evaluate how people are moving throughout Old Town because of the grid.

McMahon asked if staff is considering removing bus circulation from Strand Street. Staff is not considering prohibiting buses because of the quick turnaround. However, staff can monitor and adjust as needed.

**Commissioner Kane** asked about increasing Police presence in the first few weeks to help mitigate bad behavior. Staff is currently working with Police officer deployment.

Vice-Chair McMahon asked for a motion to endorse the King Street Place pilot and recommend that City Council approve the pilot. Commissioner Jakubek made the motion. Commissioner Gaskins seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

## **5. Action Item: Bus Transformation Project**

The Bus Transformation Project (BTP) team is seeking support and buy-in from Commissions, Boards, and/or Councils from all WMATA jurisdictions. As the City’s Transportation Commission has received updates throughout the process, and as many of our peers are seeking endorsement from their comparable Commissions, staff invited the BTP Team to present to the Transportation Commission without the need for City Council action.

The Bus Transformation Project Team has provided the following docket information:

Buses are an integral part of the National Capital Region’s transportation system and carry over 620,000 trips per day over a network that reaches 81 percent of the region’s residents. The region’s nine local bus providers (ART, CUE, DASH, DC Circulator, Fairfax Connector, Metrobus, Loudoun County Transit, Ride On, and TheBus) affordably connect residents to jobs, schools, and other aspects of daily life. However, traffic is increasing, and bus speeds are decreasing, leading to longer travel times and unreliability in getting to a destination. Customer expectations have changed and there is increased competition for fewer passengers. Government budgets are under pressure to do more with less. Bus’s market share is eroding as competition becomes more plentiful and, in some cases, more affordable. The allure of new technology, such as autonomous cars, distracts from the fact that driverless cars and transportation network companies, such as Uber and Lyft, will not solve the region’s mobility problem without defying the laws of physics and geometry. Empirical research points to the likelihood that the new options will make current problems worse.

The BTP Team is requesting that the Transportation Commission provide an endorsement of the Bus Transformation Strategy as released on September 5, 2019. support for the strategy is non-binding.

**Commissioner Jakubek** stated the need to make the bus more useful. There are currently no dedicated lanes. Dedicated lanes or infrastructure will allow buses to be on time. He also asked about Montgomery County and the planning process for Colesville Road and Route 355. The County is reevaluating Route 355 because of the Governors announcement of Route 270. They are considering dedicated lanes on Route 355. Staff considers it important to promote the BRT on Route 7, Route 1, and in the suburban communities. In addition, suburban communities should advocate for land use and access that will support transit.

**Commissioner Gaskins** asked about primary convener of the taskforce. Staff stated that this is under discussion because of the push-back. For now it has been tabled. The vision is for representation from the three states, riders, and the business community to include a cross-section that considers everyone's input. She also asked how staff will measure success. The BTP Team is considering tracking all twenty-six recommendations and report annually.

**Commissioner Marsh** stated that Alexandria does not offer free transfers. Could revenue from new riders to off-set any losses from free transfers? Mr. Miller responded that there would be a net loss despite a ridership gain, but benefits to the region outweigh the cost because of better mobility, travel time and emissions.

**Commissioner Kane** mentioned bus delays related to traffic and collecting fares. He asked if pre-paid boarding is being considered. Staff would like to implement bus rapid transit (BRT) elements such as all-door boarding, off-board fare payment and mobile fare payment. Kane asked about coordinated schedules across the region to reduce transfer waits. Staff confirmed a goal is identifying opportunities for coordination of transfer times. Kane asked about interoperability of the Transit Priority Signal (TSP), so that all buses would be able to use BRT corridors. The intent in Strategy II: advancing bus priority regionally, is to address this. Currently WMATA has an initiative to expand TSP and with interoperability. Kane asked about TSP locations (besides Beauregard Street and Route 1). Duke Street has multiple TSP locations that both WMATA and DASH use.

**Vice-Chair McMahon** is concerned the proposed scoring card does not differentiate between the different jurisdictions' progress. Mr. Miller responded that the final report card will have the level of detail that will show accountability by jurisdiction. Ultimately the goal is that residents advocate to impact the decisions on funding. He hopes that with transparency and accountability in the process, there will be momentum to push walking, biking, and transit. The business community strongly supports this regional initiative.

Vice-Chair McMahon asked for a motion to endorse the action plan in the BTP. Commissioner Kane motioned for the Transportation Commission to provide an endorsement of the BTP Strategy as released on September 5, 2019, and encouraged staff and the City to incorporate the BTP Strategy recommendations, where feasible, for planning and funding activities to ensure progress on a transformative region bus network. Commissioner Marsh seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **6. Informational Item: Draft Calendar Year 2020 Work Plan**

Every year staff works with the Transportation Commission to develop a work plan to give a broad overview of upcoming items. Staff is requesting input from the Transportation Commission on the DRAFT 2020 Work Plan. The major items in the work plan were developed from last years' plan and major initiatives this year. One major initiative is the electric vehicle charging infrastructure study. There will be some key points for updates on the Mobility Plan. Additional items include the Mount Vernon and Arlandria Small Area Plan; updates on the Complete Streets Program; updates on different WMATA planning efforts including the Blue Orange Silver Line Study; and DC to Richmond High Speed Rail project. It also includes the usual grant funding and budget items. Every other year the Transportation Commission updates the Long-Range Plan which prioritizes projects that come out of other planning efforts. Currently staff is reviewing the Alexandria Mobility Plan which is trying to establish priorities for the next decade. Staff is asking if the Commission wants to continue with the long range planning this year or wait until the Mobility process is completed.

**Vice-Chair McMahon** asked when the Alexandria Mobility Plan is expected to be complete. The tentative

date is by the end of 2020.

**Commissioner Kane** stated that the repaving updates on Complete Streets it is a major concern for the T&PB. He asked staff to present the T&PB with the repaving updates before projects begin. Kane is unsure of how or where maintenance for trails should be included in the Commission discussion. Vice-Chair McMahon agreed that the City should consider how it budgets for trail damage. Staff will bring the discussion forward during the next budget priority discussion. Kane suggested the same policy used after a catastrophic event to roads should also apply to trail facilities.

**Commissioner Jakubek** asked if the City was eligible for FEMA funding for the damage from the rainstorm event in 2019. The City could be eligible for FEMA assistance however the City will have to provide documentation. The City does have trails included in the capital, operating, and maintenance funds. Vice-Chair McMahon stated that the discussion of trails should be included in the Mobility Plan level discussion. Future plans should address the issue of relocating trail facilities that are in unsustainable locations.

**Commissioner Gaskins** asked if there are going to be decision points related to the Alexandria Mobility Plan (AMP) that also affect the Transportation Commission's work plan and priorities, and how some of those decision points show up on the work plan. Tentatively the updates are for March and June with an action item in November. However, if the Transportation Commission determines something should go for public comment it can be an agenda item. Commissioner Gaskins feels that the Long-Range Plan should be updated this year since there has been discussion not only on creating another plan, but also how those plans are going to be integrated with other plans in progress and ensure alignment.

Given the King Street Place pilot and the pilot-within-a-pilot adjustments, Gaskins requested that staff add another update to the pilot in October or November to process the results. Staff will keep the Commission updated with written items staff will add major items to the agenda. Due to the various initiatives taking place in Mt. Vernon and Arlandria, the Commission will not receive an update until later in the year. Gaskins also asked for the Commission to receive an update earlier. Staff will confirm this.

**Vice-Chair McMahon** asked about the update to Safe Routes to School initiatives. Staff will provide the Commission an update on everything that was done during 2019. Tentatively staff is looking to provide this update in February.

**Commissioner Marsh** stated that pedestrians and cyclists' injuries and fatalities nationwide and in the City are increasing. He asked about the six-month time frame to process crash data. The State crash data from 2019 is available in April, so staff will provide an update in June. Vice-Chair McMahon suggested having the Vision Zero Action Plan listed as a discussion item on the agenda instead of a consent item.

**Vice-Chair McMahon** asked staff to describe the connection between Repaving/Complete Streets updates that are scheduled for March and the Bike Ped implementation update scheduled for April. Staff will update the Commission on the repaving schedule and comments from the Repaving Survey. The Bike-Ped update is the required bi-annual update on accomplishments from the Bike-Ped chapter of the Transportation Master Plan.

## **7. Action Item: Elections**

Commissioner Jakubek nominated Vice-Chair McMahon for Chair. Vice-Chair McMahon accepted. Commissioner Kane seconded the motion. The nomination passed unanimously.

Commissioner Jakubek nominated himself for Vice-Chair and accepted the nomination for Vice-Chair.

Commissioner Schroeder seconded the motion. The nomination passed unanimously.

**8. Updates to Receive (Consent Items)**

The Commission discussed the following topics from the Consent Items:

**A. Dockless Mobility Pilot Update**

**Commissioner Gaskins** asked about communication will flow on the taskforce. The City Council members on the Transportation Commission or their designee are members of the Ad Hoc Taskforce. The members or designees will provide updates during Commission updates.

**Commissioner Jakubek** asked if the City is monitoring the resources associated with the dockless mobility program and if there is going to be data presented on it. Staff provided City Council with an update on the cost associated with the dockless mobility in December 2019.

**Commissioner Kane** stated that applications are due next week and wanted to know if staff has received any. Staff did receive some applications and are reviewing them. He also asked if staff has determined where they are going to put the restriction signs. Staff is currently still researching where to put signage.

**Commissioner Schroeder** asked for clarification on bikes not being allowed on sidewalks and some trails. City Council voted that bikes are not allowed on sidewalks in the City. However, staff is still working out those challenges with bikes not being allowed on some trails.

**9. Other business**

Several months ago, staff presented to the Commission two grant applications, one for the AT1-Plus and the service enhancements on the AT-9. Staff received funding for the AT1-Plus and service began in October 2019 to coincide with the service of the 395 express lanes. The City received \$3 million for the AT1-Plus and another \$2 million for the AT-9 over the next 20 months. Improvements include substantially increasing frequency on these routes as a precursor to the West End Transitway and the improved all day service sought from the Alexandria Transit Vision. Additional real-time info displays that show when the next bus is arriving will be installed at key AT-1 Plus bus stops in the coming weeks. DASH has added bus wraps celebrating the diversity in the West End. Since receiving the grant, it has been successful in the first month of implementation with November ridership at twenty-six percent higher than November 2018.

**Commissioner Kane** asked if the bus wraps had already been implemented. Staff confirmed they have been implemented. Also, has staff received any feedback on how the toll lanes are working. Staff has not received any formal feedback on the toll lanes.

**Adjournment**

At 9:07 pm, The Transportation Commission adjourned.



# *City of Alexandria, Virginia*

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## **MEMORANDUM**

DATE: FEBRUARY 19, 2020

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: HILLARY ORR, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, T&ES

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM # 4 – HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT CORRIDORS UPDATE

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**ISSUE:** Staff update to Transportation Commission on the status of the High Capacity Transit Corridor Projects.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Commission receive the update.

**BACKGROUND:** In the 2008 Transportation Master Plan, the City identified three high capacity transit corridors that were then reaffirmed in the 2012 Transit Corridors Feasibility Study. The first Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor was implemented along Route 1 in 2014. The City has been working to fund and advance the other two corridors, and the Department of Transportation & Environmental Services (T&ES) has now added a new staff member dedicated to the implementation these projects.

**DISCUSSION:** The Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Program Manager, is working to advance projects on all three transit corridors.

**Corridor A: Metroway Extension** With \$5 million of funding from the Amazon Incentive Package and the upcoming developments of the Potomac Yard Metro Station and the impending development in the North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan, planning has begun for the final improvements to the existing Metroway line in Alexandria. The final components for the corridor include:

- Extending the dedicated transit lanes on US Rt. 1 two blocks to the north to Evans Lane
- Construction of the permanent northbound station at East Glebe Road and Rt. 1
- Construction of new stations near the new Potomac Yard Metrorail station
- Construction of new stations near the new Virginia Tech campus
- Planning and design of the dedicated transit lanes along Potomac Avenue

**Corridor B: Duke Street** The city was awarded \$12 million in NVTAF funding to start an Alternatives Analysis and Environmental studies on the Duke Street corridor between Landmark Mall and the King Street Metrorail station. The original planning for this project took place in 2012 during the Transit Corridors Feasibility Study. In the upcoming year, staff will lead an extensive public outreach effort building on the concepts of the original study. Transit

improvements are the primary focus of this effort, but bike and pedestrian access and safety will also be a part of this corridor study. The alternatives identified in 2012 will be reviewed as well as other alternatives identified by the public during the alternative's analysis process.

Following the public outreach and alternatives development phase of the planning process is completed, a complete environmental analysis will be conducted to meet the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) act. Upon completion and federal approval of the environmental documentation, a phasing plan and initial design will begin. The Alternatives Analysis and environmental study will begin in summer 2020 and continue through mid-late 2022.

Additional funding requests are pending for this project. The City applied for \$75 million in NVTa funding in 2019 and is awaiting a determination. The design phased implementation construction schedules for this project are to be determined based on future funding availability.

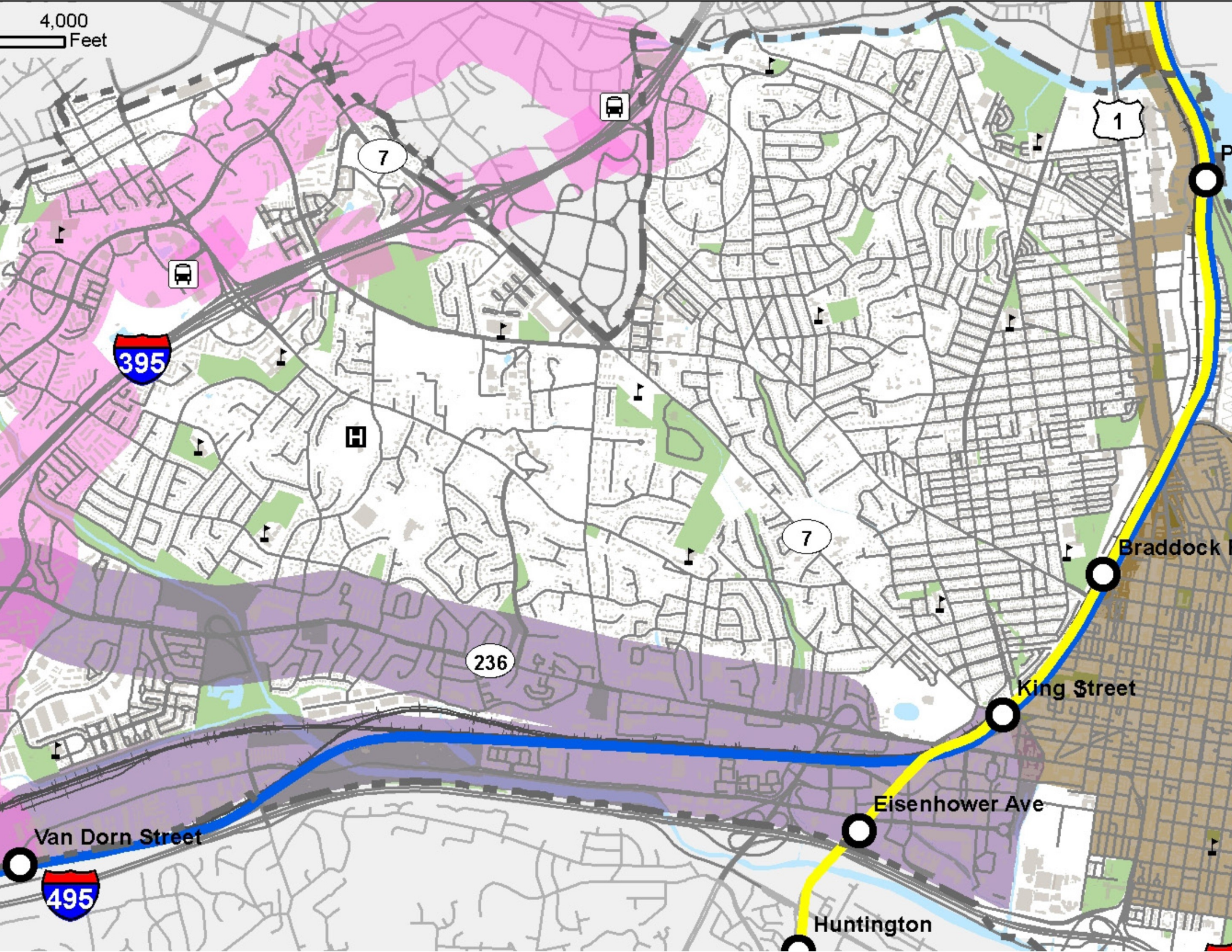
**Corridor C: West End Transitway** In October 2019, the City and DASH implemented service improvements and new branding to the existing AT1 route that runs between Van Dorn Metro and Seminary Plaza via Landmark Mall, Lincolnia, Mark Center, and Southern Towers. This is an early step in implementing the City's long-term plan to bring BRT service from the West End to the Pentagon along the West End Transitway.

After several years of planning, environmental analysis and public outreach, the City is moving forward with design of the first phase of improvements to the corridor. The procurement process is underway to hire an engineering firm to develop construction plans for phase 1 which focuses on Transportation System Management (TSM) improvements. These include:

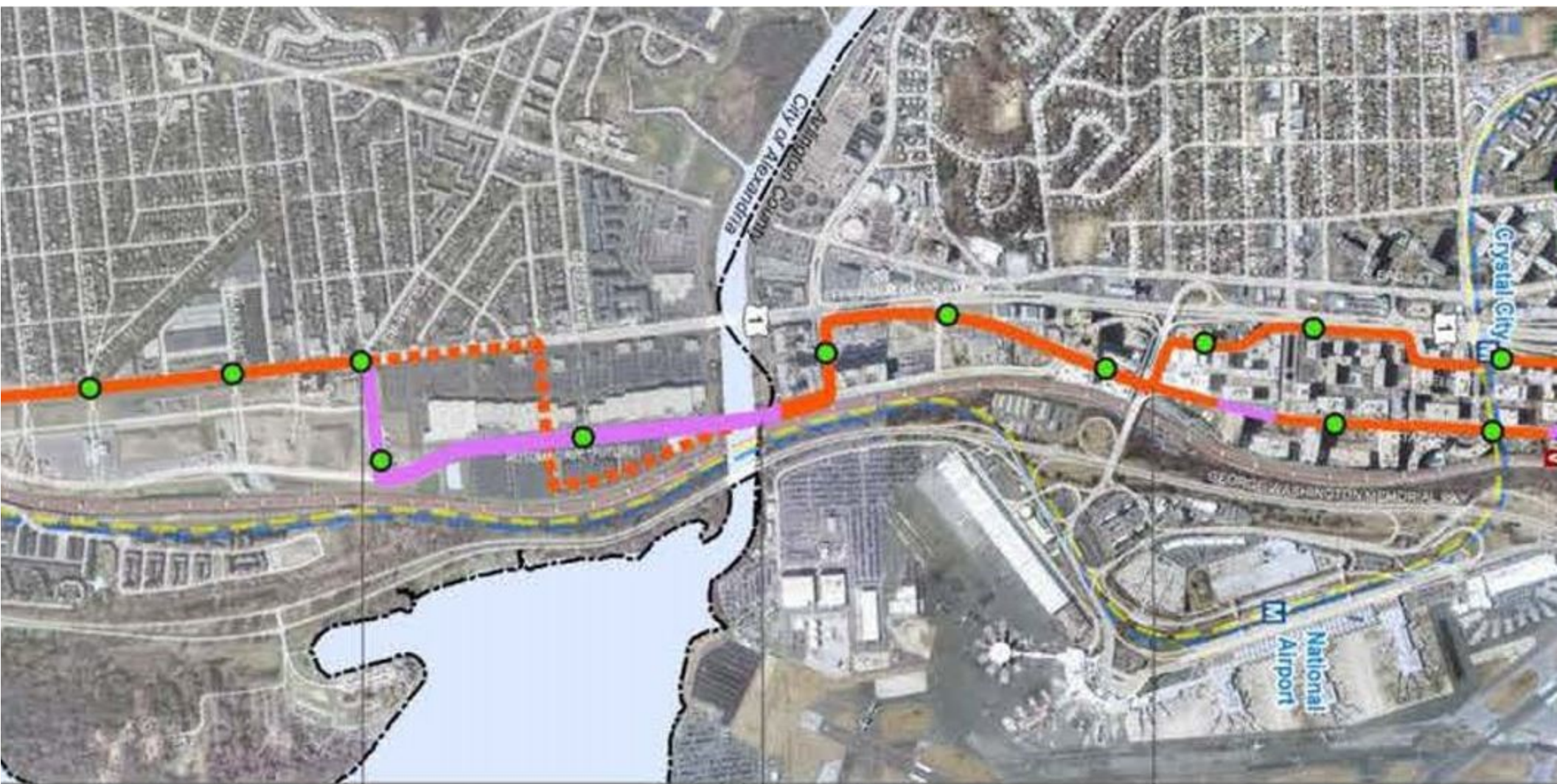
- Installation of Traffic Signal Priority (TSP) system at 20 intersections
- Roadway improvements near Van Dorn Metro station, including a NB dedicated transit lane and queue-jump
- SB queue-jump at Beauregard / Sanger Avenue
- Intersection improvements at Beauregard and West Braddock
- ADA pedestrian improvements to stations
- New mid-block crossing at Sanger Avenue and Trent Court with a Rapid Flash Beacon (RFB)
- Intersection improvements at King and Beauregard
- Permanent and interim station design at 10 locations

Approximately \$74 million has been awarded to the implementation of the West End Transitway from a variety of local, state, and federal funds. Funding is available to design and construct the Phase 1 improvements, including station improvements in Southern Towers. The City is applying for additional funding for station improvements in the redeveloped Landmark Mall site. Other improvements and right-of-way acquisition will be ongoing as properties adjacent to the corridor are re-developed.









**B**

Alexandria  
Route 1

**C**

Alexandria  
Potomac Yard

**D**

Arlington  
Potomac Yard

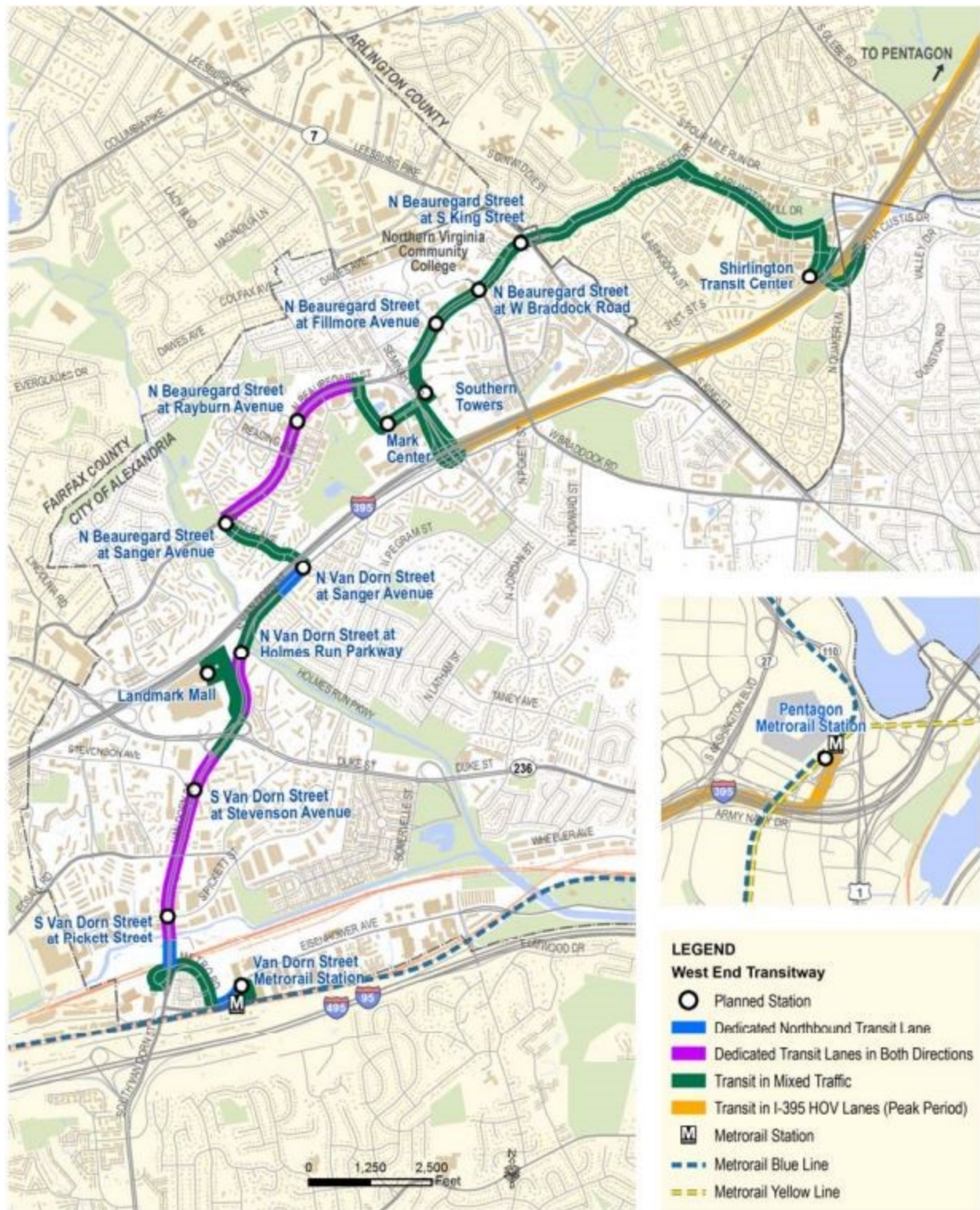
**E**

Arlington  
Crystal City









# City of Alexandria, Virginia

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: FEBRUARY 19, 2020

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: HILLARY ORR, DEPUTY DIRECTOR T&ES

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM 5 – PROPOSED APPLICATIONS FOR COMMONWEALTH SMART SCALE PROGRAM (FY26-27)

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**ISSUE:** Consideration of proposed projects to be submitted to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and Department of Rail and Public Transit (DRPT) for FY26-27 SMART SCALE Funding.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Transportation Commission endorse the submission of five projects and maximum funding amounts.

**BACKGROUND:** In 2014, HB2 was signed into law, and in June 2016, the program was renamed SMART SCALE. SMART stands for System Management Allocation of Resources for Transportation and SCALE stands for the six-road project scoring attributes: Safety, Congestion mitigation, Accessibility, Land use, Environmental and economic development. SMART SCALE requires the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) to develop and implement a quantifiable and transparent prioritization process for making funding decisions for capacity enhancing projects within the six-year improvement program. The goal of SMART SCALE is to ensure the state invests limited tax dollars into projects that meet critical transportation needs.

The fourth round of SMART SCALE will be for projects seeking funding for FY26-27. Pre-applications are due by April 2, 2020. After pre-applications are submitted, staff from VDOT and DRPT will screen candidate projects to determine if they qualify to be scored. Final applications for eligible projects will be due August 3, 2020. Selected projects will be scored in fall and winter 2020. In January 2021, a list of all submitted projects and their scores will be submitted to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) and will be posted on-line. In April or May 2021, the draft Six Year Plan, which will include SMART SCALE projects, will be released by the CTB, followed by public hearings and a public comment period to gather input. The CTB is expected to make its final decision on which projects to fund through SMART SCALE in June 2021.

The following factors will be used to score submitted projects: congestion mitigation, economic development, accessibility, safety, environmental quality, and land use. Different weights will be assigned to such factors based on a project's location within a region of the state. Within Northern Virginia, congestion mitigation is the highest weighted factor at 45%; land use at 20%;

accessibility at 15%; environmental quality at 10%; economic development at 5%; and safety at 5%.

**DISCUSSION:** Staff has identified five projects believed to be good candidates for funding based on the guidelines and criteria outlined in the SMART SCALE process. Because the timeline for submissions of pre-applications is significantly sooner than the application deadline in previous years, staff will develop detailed cost estimates over the next several months. Staff is requesting that the Transportation Commission endorse of the following project list with maximum amounts, which will later be refined for the applications.

Route 1 at E. Glebe Road Intersection Improvements	\$10,000,000
Route 1 South Improvements	\$3,500,000
Duke Street Transitway	\$100,000,000
Upper King Street Multimodal Improvements	\$40,000,000
Landmark Transit Center	\$15,000,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$148,500,000</b>

- **Route 1 at East Glebe Road: Up to \$10 million** – This project was recommended in the North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan and the Oakville Triangle and Route 1 Corridor Plan. The project will design, acquire Right-of-Way and construct improvements at the intersection of East Glebe Road and Route 1, including a dedicated left turn, thru and right turn lane for eastbound traffic. The project will also improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities along this portion of the road, between East Glebe and Laverne Avenue. The project will be constructed in coordination with future development at Oakville Triangle. The project would be leveraged with \$1.6 million in funding required by the Oakville Triangle development. The design and construction would also be coordinated with the Route 1 Metroway Extension project (between East Glebe Road and Evans Lane).
- **Route 1 South Improvements: Up to \$3.5 million** - This project was recommended in the South Patrick Street Housing Affordability Strategy. The project entails installing a 10-12'-wide landscaped median and pedestrian refuge islands on South Patrick Street (Route 1) from Wolfe Street to Jefferson Street (from the current 4'-wide, concrete median) and narrowing the travel lanes to calm vehicular traffic. The project addresses safety and accessibility across South Patrick Street. The Vision Zero Action Plan also identified South Patrick Street as a high-crash corridor. During the South Patrick Street Strategy, residents have also identified the width of South Patrick Street and its traffic as a barrier for people to access other parts of Old Town.
- **Duke Street Transitway: Up to \$100 million** – This project will include Right-of-Way and construction for the Duke Street Transitway between the King Street Metro Station and Landmark Mall. The project is one of the City's three transitways identified in the Transportation Master Plan. A first phase includes acquisition of electric buses, dedicated transit lanes along portions of the corridor, new stations, queue jump lanes, Transit Signal Priority, and pedestrian and bicycle improvements. The City currently has \$12 million secured in NVTa 70% funds for the planning, environmental work and design. The City is currently seeking FY24-25 NVTa 70% funds for Phase 1 construction and will know



by June 2020 if any amount is awarded. The Smart Scale request is based on the maximum amount needed for phase 1 Right-of-way and construction improvements, assuming no funding is secured through NVTa.

- **Upper King Street Multimodal Improvements: Up to \$40 million** – This project will fund the design, Right-of-Way and construction of improvements for people who drive, walk, bike and use transit along King Street between King/Quaker/Braddock and North Hampton Street. Today, there is a significant lack of these facilities, contributing to safety needs along this corridor. The project was ranked as the most important pedestrian improvement project, and priority #8 for bicycle improvements in the Pedestrian and Bicycle chapter of the Transportation Master Plan, adopted in 2016.
- **Landmark Transit Center: Up to \$15 million** – This project includes the design and construction of a new transit center within the redeveloped Landmark Mall. The project is recommended in the Landmark Van Dorn Corridor Plan and the Alexandria Transit Vision Plan. The station would serve local transit as well as two transitways – the Duke Street Transitway and the West End Transitway, to provide a seamless connection between transit routes. The transit center would be located along a new “transit street” including new roadway made of reinforced concrete, sidewalks, six transit bays, platforms and shelters, lighting, and street furniture. The project would be coordinated with the redevelopment of the mall.

# City of Alexandria, Virginia

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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** FEBRUARY 19, 2020

**TO:** MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

**FROM:** HILLARY ORR, DEPUTY DIRECTOR T&ES

**SUBJECT:** AGENDA ITEM 6 - PROPOSED APPLICATION TO THE  
TRANSPORTATION-LAND USE CONNECTIONS PROGRAM

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**ISSUE:** Transportation Commission consideration of an application for the Transportation-Land Use Connections (TLC) program of the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC) to analyze the feasibility and impact of a low-income fare pass program or to identify transit bottlenecks throughout the City in coordination with the Alexandria Transit Company (DASH) and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA).

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Transportation Commission endorse the City's application to the TLC Program.

**BACKGROUND:** The TLC Program provides short-term consultant services to local jurisdictions for small planning projects that promote mixed-use, walkable communities and support a variety of transportation alternatives. The program provides consultant assistance of \$30,000 to \$60,000 for planning projects. If funded, project award would occur in Fall 2020, and project duration typically takes six months. Applications to the FY 2021 TLC program are due March 9, 2020.

**DISCUSSION:** The City proposes to apply for one of the two potential projects below:

- 1) **Option 1: Low-Income Fare Pass Assessment:** This option would analyze the feasibility and impact of a low-income fare pass program in coordination with the Alexandria Transit Company (DASH) and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). The analysis would consider what a program in Alexandria could look like (i.e. who would receive a discounted fare, the actual discount, any restrictions on hours of service, applicable on DASH and WMATA or just DASH, etc.), the impact on ridership, how the program could be implemented, the costs to the City and how that impacts the City's subsidy to WMATA, and consistency with the Alexandria Transit Vision Plan and the Bus Transformation Project. This analysis will enable the City to make a more informed decision when considering any changes to the DASH fare structure.

Currently, the District of Columbia and WMATA are conducting a similar study which includes randomized evaluation of free and discounted transit fares. The D.C. study will consider the impact of cost on low-income residents' public transit use and overall well-being. The findings may inform initiatives that make public transit more accessible to low-income residents.

The Virginia General Assembly is currently debating a potential state program to provide free or reduced transit for low-income riders as part of HB1414. If this program passes, then this application will no longer be needed, and staff would apply for the project described in Option 2.

- 2) Option 2: Transit Bottleneck Identification: This option would analyze and identify transit bottlenecks in the City in coordination with DASH and WMATA. This analysis would use DASH and WMATA bus speed data and other available sources to identify intersections, corridors, street segments, etc. that slow bus service and/or reduce bus service reliability. This effort would also use ridership data and recommendations from the Alexandria Transit Vision Plan (ATV) to prioritize projects or identify future analysis needed to implement the ATV. This effort is consistent with the goals of the ATV and the Bus Transformation Project to prioritize bus service and improve speed and reliability.

Bus service is an essential transportation option for Alexandrians, especially for low-income residents, and to access jobs and services. Reliability is especially important for low-paying jobs and service jobs, for which employees do not have the option of arriving late. With faster and more reliable service, the bus would be a more attractive option for all travelers, potentially leading to ridership increases. In addition, by reducing bottlenecks in the bus system, this could lead to reduced transit costs. These all have the potential to reduce City transit subsidies. The outcome of this study could be used when considered funding decisions in relation to other future transit initiatives.

## 2020 Transportation Commission Work Plan

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
								BREAK				
<b>City Planning Studies</b>												
King Street Place		▲									▲	
Alexandria Mobility Plan						▲					▲	
Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy			▲		▲				▲			
Mt Vernon/Arlandria Initiatives				▲						▲	▲	
Repaving Updates/Complete Streets			▲									
Safe Routes to School			▲									
Transitways		▲										
Duke Street Initiatives					▲					▲		
<b>Transportation Funding</b>												
Transportation LRP - Unfunded Projects				▲	▲	▲			▲			
Transportation-Land Use Connections		▲								▲		
FY2021-2030 City Budget			▲	▲						▲		
6 Year Plan / RSTP / CMAQ Funding Request										▲		
NVTA 70% Funding												▲
FY2026-27 Smart Scale Grants		▲			▲							
<b>Transportation Programs</b>												
TDM Program										▲		
Vision Zero Action Plan Implementation					▲							
Capital Bikeshare Expansion			▲									
Bike Ped Implementation				▲								
Smart Mobility / Parking Technologies									▲			
<b>Regional Projects / Plans</b>												
DC to Richmond High Speed Rail	▲			▲								
Blue Orange Silver Line Study (WMATA)	▲		▲						▲			
Bus Transformation Project (WMATA)	▲											
WMATA Budget	▲	▲		▲								▲

Discussion Item ▲  
 Action Item ▲  
 Consent Item ▲

# *City of Alexandria, Virginia*

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## **MEMORANDUM**

DATE: February 19, 2020

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: HILLARY ORR, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, T&ES

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM # 8 – ITEMS FOR CONSENT

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**ISSUE:** Staff update to Transportation Commission on various ongoing projects.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Commission receive the items for consent.

### **A. WMATA Budget**

On January 16, 2020, the WMATA Board voted to release the [proposed FY 2021 operating budget and FY 2021-2026 capital budget](#) for public hearings. The docket for the public hearing includes several items that may be included in the final budget, however the final budget will likely not include all items. Highlights include:

#### Service Proposals:

- Reduced WMATA bus service, which in Alexandria includes:
  - NH-2 will no longer serve Old Town-King Street Station (only the Huntington Station); reduced frequency
  - 7A/Y – elimination of segment between the Pentagon to Downtown DC
  - 22A – elimination if all 22A trips, convert all 22C trips to 22F trips - No service on this route through ParkFairfax. No off-peak service on the route
- Late night weekend train service extended from midnight to until 2AM on Fridays and Saturdays
- Rail service between 5:00 AM and 6:00 AM will decrease (8 minutes to 12 minutes headways)
- Increased Sunday bus service on certain routes in Alexandria including:
  - 7A/F
  - 23B/T
  - 28A
- Increased Sunday rail service to match Saturday service levels

#### Fare Proposals:

- Small increases in rail and bus fares for passengers paying in cash (no increase to SmartTrip base fares)

- Additional and more economical bus passes
- A flat \$2 fare per trip on weekends
- No cost to people transferring between Metrobus and Metrorail and any jurisdictional bus to rail

Changes from the General Manager proposal shared with the Transportation Commission in December include the following Board Amendments:

- The introduction of a 1- and 3- day weekend pass product
- An increase in MetroExtra Bus service fares
- Dulles Station \$1 surcharge
- Peak fares for late night rail service

On Saturday, February 9, WMATA announced public hearings and opened the public comment period for the Proposed FY2021 Operating Budget and Related Service and Fare Proposals. Public hearings will be held at the following times and locations:

**Monday, February 24, 2020**

Hilton Arlington

950 N. Stafford Street, Arlington, VA 22203

**Open House at 6:00 p.m. – Public Hearing at 6:30 p.m.**

**Tuesday, February 25, 2020**

Metro Points Hotel

8500 Annapolis Road

New Carrollton, MD 20784

**Open House at 6:00 p.m. – Public Hearing at 6:30 p.m.**

**Wednesday, February 26, 2020**

Metro Headquarters Building

600 5th Street, NW

Washington, DC 20001

**Open House at 4:00 p.m. – Public Hearing at 4:30 p.m.**

Testimony may be submitted online via a survey at [wmata.com/budget](https://wmata.com/budget). The survey will close at 5 p.m. on Monday, March 2, 2020.

**B. Legislative Update**

Many transportation-related bills have been proposed in the Virginia General Assembly that include provisions to increase transportation funding and improve safety. HB1414/SB890, an omnibus transportation bill touches on a wide variety of areas including (as of 2/10/20):

- Funding

- Providing additional funding for NVRTA through an increase to the gas tax, an introduction of a fuel-efficient fee along with an alternative pilot program to charge a fee based on vehicle usage, an increase to the transient occupancy tax, and the introduction of a recordation tax in Northern Virginia
- Increasing funding to transit to reduce fares for low-income transit riders and improve service. Additional funding would be available for operating and capital and for funding dedicated bus infrastructure on routes of regional significance
- Safety:
  - Establishing an open container law
  - Requiring passengers to wear seat belts as a primary offence
  - Prohibiting handheld communication while driving
  - Enhancing speed enforcement
  - Enabling localities to lower speed limits
- Rail
  - Establishing a Virginia Passenger Rail Authority

Additional bills have been introduced that align with the City's Vision Zero goals, including clarifying duties of the driver when yielding to pedestrians and increasing penalties for not moving over when approaching a vehicle with warning lights.

Crossover Day was February 11, which is the last day for each house to act on its own legislation, excluding budget. Session adjourns on March 7.